



RICK SNYDER
GOVERNOR


STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
LANSING

MICHAEL P. FLANAGAN
SUPERINTENDENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

October 22, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: State Board of Education

FROM: Michael P. Flanagan, Chairman 

SUBJECT: Approval of English Language Development Standards for English Language Learners

In July 2012, the U.S. Department of Education approved Michigan's Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) Flexibility Request. A requirement of this request was for Michigan to adopt a set of English language proficiency (ELP) standards, as well as an ELP assessment linked to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). In accordance with achieving this requirement, the Bureau of Assessment & Accountability (BAA) and the Office of Field Services (OFS) investigated options for new ELP standards and assessment adoption.

Through this investigation, the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Development (ELD) Standards, along with other optional standards, were reviewed with a statewide stakeholder group. The WIDA ELD was unanimously recommended by the stakeholder group.

Attachment A describes the WIDA Standards and Assessments, process to solicit input from the field, an alignment study, the gap analysis and provides links to information requested at the October 9, 2012 Board meeting.

The proposed standards meet federal and state requirements, including the requirement of having linkage to the CCSS. The State Board of Education is asked to approve adoption of the WIDA ELD Standards as a replacement for the current Michigan English Language Proficiency Standards. The intent is to transition from the current standards to WIDA throughout the 2012-13 school year, with full implementation by fall 2013.

It is recommended that the State Board of Education approve the adoption of the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment English Language Development Standards as attached to the Superintendent's memorandum dated October 22, 2012.

STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

JOHN C. AUSTIN – PRESIDENT • CASANDRA E. ULBRICH – VICE PRESIDENT
NANCY DANHOF – SECRETARY • MARIANNE YARED MCGUIRE – TREASURER
RICHARD ZEILE – NASBE DELEGATE • KATHLEEN N. STRAUS
DANIEL VARNER • EILEEN LAPPIN WEISER

608 WEST ALLEGAN STREET • P.O. BOX 30008 • LANSING, MICHIGAN 48909
www.michigan.gov/mde • (517) 373-3324

OVERVIEW OF WORLD-CLASS DESIGN AND ASSESSMENT ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS AND REVIEW PROCESS

As part of its approved ESEA Flexibility Request, Michigan is required to adopt a set of English language development standards no later than the 2013-14 school year. After exploring options for new standards, the Bureau of Assessment & Accountability (BAA) and the Office of Field Services (OFS), along with stakeholders, focused their investigation on transitioning from Michigan's current English proficiency standards and assessment system to the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) English Language Development (ELD) Standards and WIDA ACCESS/ASSETS assessment system.

Standards

The K-12 WIDA ELD Standards for English language learners (ELs) are a set of English language proficiency standards designed to define the necessary linguistic and content area competencies for ELs. They were initially developed in 2004 by the World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA) Consortium, a not-for-profit linguistic standards and assessment consortium led by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction. Partners of WIDA include other recognized organizations such as the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and MetriTech. The WIDA ELD Standards have been adopted by 33 states and U.S. territories, including the District of Columbia and the Northern Mariana Islands.

WIDA's revised 2012 ELD Standards encompass both the social contexts assigned with language acquisition and academic contexts corresponding to school in general and link to Michigan's Career and College Ready Standards (CCRS). Additionally, they offer a clear focus on oral language development; literacy in all content areas; an attention to genre, register, and conventions of language; and instructional supports. The standards define the necessary linguistic competencies for ELs to be able to succeed across the following areas:

- Social & Instructional Language
- The Language of Language Arts
- The Language of Mathematics
- The Language of Science
- The Language of Social Studies

In each of the strands, the WIDA ELD Standards provide focused progressions of expressive and receptive linguistic skills across the four language domains of Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. These progressions extend along a continuum of second language acquisition and are grouped into 6 stages:

Level 1 – Entering
Level 2 – Beginning
Level 3 – Developing
Level 4 – Expanding
Level 5 – Bridging
Level 6 – Reaching

The WIDA ELD Standards can be found at the following address:
<http://wida.us/get.aspx?id=540>

Assessments

The adoption of the WIDA ELD Standards will allow BAA to move forward with replacing the current Michigan K-12 English Language Proficiency Assessment (ELPA) with WIDA's W-APT (screener) in the fall of 2013 and the WIDA ACCESS (summative) in the spring of 2014. Through MDE's current participation in the ASSETS Consortium, a computer-based assessment system being developed by WIDA through EAG funding, the W-APT and ACCESS will be replaced in the Spring of 2015 with the ASSETS assessments.

Ultimately, the goals of the WIDA standards and assessment system align with the CCRS and the movement to computer-based assessments by defining the academic linguistic skills across grades and content areas for ELs so that all students can be career and college ready writers, readers, critical thinkers, and communicators.

Seeking Feedback and Input

The MDE English Learner Advisory Committee is comprised of a geographical representation of English as a Second Language (ESL)/bilingual teachers, administrators, Intermediate School District leaders, and community organization members. During the November 2011 meeting, the Advisory Committee members were presented information on two ELD standards and assessment consortia and asked to recommend one for adoption, along with the rationale for the recommendation.

The unanimous recommendation by the committee members was to adopt the WIDA standards and assessment system. Members cited the following rationale for adopting WIDA standards:

1. WIDA has a well-established research agenda;
2. There is a clear focus on oral language development that is a prerequisite to literacy development;
3. WIDA standards incorporate literacy across all content areas;
4. There is a strong alignment between WIDA standards, Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) and Michigan's CCRS.
5. WIDA standards include the necessary linguistic elements and conventions;
6. WIDA has developed a wealth of instructional and professional development supports;
7. The transition from the current ELPS to WIDA would be seamless and achievable; and

8. The MDE and local school teams will have the opportunity to provide input during future assessment item development and higher level meetings.

Alignment to Michigan's CCRS and Gap Analysis

Michigan's current English Language Proficiency (ELP) standards and assessments are not linked to the CCRS. The WIDA standards, however, have been successfully aligned. An alignment study conducted by an independent agency, the University of Oklahoma, was completed in the spring of 2011 to determine the level of linkage and correspondence of the WIDA standards to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). The findings from the study conducted showed substantial linkage between the WIDA ELD standards and the CCSS in ELA and Math. Additionally, strong correspondence was found between the WIDA standards and the CCSS in Speaking and Listening. Moderate correspondence was found in the areas of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics. Based on the outcomes of the study, the WIDA ELD standards were revised to provide even closer alignment to the CCSS.

A copy of the alignment study can be found at:
<http://www.wida.us/get.aspx?id=371>.

Gap Analysis between Michigan's Current ELP Standards and WIDA Standards

In addition to the alignment work with the CCSS, the Office of Field Services convened a group of K-12 and higher education Michigan EL and language acquisition specialists to provide expert opinion on the gaps between the Michigan ELP Standards and the CCRS and analyze differences between the current Michigan ELP Standards and the WIDA Standards, as well as the international TESOL Standards on which Michigan's ELP Standards were based. The purpose of the alignment study was to develop a statewide professional development plan to better prepare Michigan educators in understanding and teaching the new WIDA and CCRS standards to English learners during the transition period from the current ELP to the future WIDA standards and CCRS. The comprehensive professional development plan will accelerate English learners' acquisition of the WIDA and CCRS standards and narrow the linguistic and academic achievement gaps between English learners and their non-English learner counterparts.

The following additional information requested can be found at: [English Language Learners WIDA 2012](#)

1. Michigan English Language Proficiency Standards and WIDA English Language Development Standards Gap Analysis
2. Michigan Department of Education English Learner Advisory Committee
3. Summary Analysis of the Most Commonly Spoken Languages in Michigan
4. Location of English Learners by District